

LCGCC Recommendations submitted by Michael Regan (Climate Change Adaptation Act) - February 5, 2010

The Climate Change Adaptation Act of 2010

WHEREAS, even with dramatic reductions in carbon emissions, current climate trends will lead to unavoidable impacts and associated threats to North Carolina's natural resources, essential infrastructure, and economic vitality; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Coastal Resources Commission's Coastal Hazards Science Panel has recommended that North Carolina plan for at least 3.2 feet (one meter) of sea level rise by 2100; and

WHEREAS, prudence dictates that North Carolina should take practical measures to adapt to these changes in order to maximize the security of the state's natural resources, essential infrastructure, and economic vitality:

The North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources shall conduct an assessment of the projected impacts to North Carolina from climate change including but not limited to sea level rise, more frequent and intense heat waves, increased air and water temperature, increased storm intensity and frequency, altered rainfall patterns, droughts, and floods. Based on the best available science, this assessment shall report on the range of projections for identified impacts and the degree of confidence in those projections.

This assessment shall be conducted with the participation and cooperation of state agencies including but not limited to the North Carolina Department of Transportation, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the North Carolina Department of Commerce, the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission; and in conjunction with appropriate federal agencies including but not limited to the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the Federal Highway Administration, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Marine Fisheries Service; and drawing on the expertise of universities, nongovernmental organizations, and other units of government.

This assessment shall identify which resources of the state are threatened by projected impacts including but not limited to: 1) natural resources of the coastal, piedmont, and mountain regions of the state; 2) public, residential, commercial and industrial buildings; 3) transportation and other essential infrastructure; 4) water supplies; 5) commercial activities, including agriculture and forestry; 6) public health; and 7) recreational and conservation lands. Based on the best available science, this assessment shall report on the degree of threat and the degree of confidence in those projections.

This assessment shall identify needed changes to existing planning tools and new planning tools needed to take into account projected impacts from climate

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change including but not limited to floodplain mapping, steep slope mapping, basinwide water planning, coastal zone planning, beach and shoreline planning, and transportation and other infrastructure planning.

In order to address the most urgent climate impacts, this assessment shall recommend adaptation strategies including but not limited to public policies, laws, regulations, and programs to implement physical adaptation measures, stimulate market responses, provide appropriate incentives, and regulate future actions.

This assessment shall recommend mechanisms and processes to regularly reassess and implement improvements to the state's ability to adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change.

DENR shall make an interim report to the Environmental Review Commission on January 1, 2011 and a final report on April 1, 2012.